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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/748,889 | 12/27/2000 | Frederick W. Ryan JR. | F-212 | 5705 |

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PITNEY BOWES INC.
35 WATERVIEW DRIVE
P.O. BOX 3000
MSC 26-22
SHELTON, CT 06484-8000

| EXAMINER | |
|---|---|
| SHERR, CRISTINA O | |

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|---|---|
| 3621 | |

DATE MAILED: 06/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 09/748,889 | RYAN ET AL. | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Cristina Owen Sherr | 3621 | |

*-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --*

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *March 27, 2006*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-31* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-31* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

## DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to the applicant's amendment filed March 27, 2006. Claims 1-31 are currently pending in this case.

### *Response to Arguments*

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-31 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-31are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dian et al (US 5,346,072) in view of Kara et al (US 6,199,055).

5. Regarding claim 1 –

Dian discloses a mail piece verification system for processing a mail piece in a path of travel, the mail piece having associated therewith mail piece data, the system comprising: an incoming mail processing center for receiving the mail piece and obtaining the mail piece data at an outgoing mail processing center located downstream in the path of travel from the incoming mail processing center, the outgoing mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces; and a data center in operative communication with the incoming mail processing center and the outgoing mail processing center; and

wherein: the incoming mail processing center uploads the mail piece data to the data center; and the outgoing mail processing center uses the instructions to control operation of at least one of the mail processing machines located at the outgoing mail processing center to process the mail piece an incoming mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces (e.g. col 1 ln 32 – col 2 ln 42).

6. Dian does not disclose, but Kara does, a data center performing a verification check on the mail piece data and downloading instructions based upon the verification check to the outgoing mail processing center (e.g. col 2 ln 60 – col 3 ln 35).

7. Regarding claim 2-

Dian discloses a system claim 1 wherein the incoming mail processing center performs a preliminary check on the mail piece data that is different from the verification check performed by the data center; and the verification check includes cryptographic calculations to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid (e.g. col 3 ln 30-45).

8. Regarding claim ~~2~~ 3

Kara discloses a system wherein the preliminary check includes a check to confirm that the mail piece data includes at least one of the following: (i) recognition of a valid meter serial number; (ii) a posting date within an acceptable range; and (iii) a valid recipient address; and the verification check further includes a duplicate detection analysis to determine whether or not the mail piece data has been fraudulently copied (e.g. col 3 ln40-55).

9. Regarding claim 4 –

Dian discloses a system, wherein the system uses the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; the outgoing mail processing center represents a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route; and the data center limits the download of the instructions to the particular one of the plurality of outgoing mail processing centers (e.g. col 4 ln 1-20).

10. Regarding claims 5-14 –

Dian discloses a system wherein the system uses the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and the system uses the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; the system assigns a global identification number to the mail piece that is used by the system to access the mail piece data and the instructions associated with the mail piece; the mail piece is of a physical type; and the mail piece data includes a postal indicium; the system uses the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; the outgoing mail processing center represents a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route; and the data center limits the download of the instructions to the particular one of the plurality of outgoing mail processing centers; wherein the system uses the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and the system uses the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; the incoming mail processing center

performs a preliminary check on the mail piece data that is different from the verification check performed by the data processing center; and the verification check includes cryptographic calculations to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid; the preliminary check includes a check to confirm that the mail piece data includes at least one of the following: (i) recognition of a valid meter serial number; (ii) a posting date within an acceptable range; and (iii) a valid recipient address; and the verification check further includes a duplicate detection analysis to determine whether or not the mail piece data has been fraudulently copied; the system uses the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and the system uses the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; the incoming mail processing center performs a preliminary check on the mail piece data that is different from the verification check performed by the data center; and the verification check includes cryptographic calculations to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid; the system uses the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; the outgoing mail processing center represents a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route; and the data center limits the download of the instructions to the particular one of, the plurality of outgoing mail processing centers; the preliminary check includes a check to confirm that the mail piece data includes at least one of the following: (i) recognition of a valid meter serial number; (ii) a posting date within an acceptable range; and (iii) a valid recipient address; and

the verification check further includes a duplicate detection analysis to determine whether or not the mail piece data has been fraudulently copied (e.g. col 3 ln 5-35).

11. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Dian and Kara in order to obtain greater security in the processing of mail.

12. Regarding claim 15 –

Dian discloses a method of operating a mail piece verification system to process a mail piece, the method comprising the steps) of: an incoming mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces, obtaining mail piece data associated with a mail piece using at least one of a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces, the plurality of mail processing machines being located at an incoming mail processing center; uploading the mail piece data to a data center; to an outgoing mail processing center located downstream in a path of travel from the incoming mail processing center the outgoing mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces; and using the instructions to control operation of at least one of the plurality of mail processing machines at the outgoing mail processing center to process the mail piece (e.g. col 1 ln 32 – col 2 ln 42).

13. Dian does not disclose, but Kara does, performing a verification check on the mail piece data; downloading instructions based upon the verification check (e.g. col 2 ln30 – col 3 ln40).

14. Regarding claims 16-19 –

Dian discloses a method comprising the steps) of performing a preliminary check on the mail piece data at the incoming mail processing center that is different from the verification checks performed by the data center; and using cryptographic calculations during the verification check to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid; using the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; and limiting the download of the instructions to a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route; using the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and using the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; assigning a global identification number to the mail piece; and using the global identification number to access the mail piece data and the instructions associated with the mail piece; and wherein the mail piece is of a physical type; and the mail piece data includes a postal indicium (e.g. col 3 ln 25-40).

15. Regarding claims 20-23 –

Kara discloses a method comprising the steps of within the preliminary check step, checking to confirm that the mail piece data includes at least one of the following: (i) recognition of a valid meter serial number; (ii) a posting date within an acceptable range; and (iii) a valid recipient address; and within the verification check step, performing a duplicate detection analysis to determine whether or not the mail piece data has been fraudulently copied; using the mail piece data to determine a delivery

route for the mail piece; and limiting the download of the instructions to a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route; using the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and using the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; performing a preliminary check on the mail piece data at the incoming mail processing center that is different from the verification check performed by the data center; and using cryptographic calculations during the verification check to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid (e.g. col 3 ln 50-65).

16. Regarding claims 24-26 –

Kara discloses a method comprising the steps of using the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and using the service class to establish a priority for the upload of mail piece data from the incoming mail processing center to the data center and the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; performing a preliminary check on the mail piece data at the incoming mail processing center that is different from the verification check performed by the data center; and using cryptographic calculations during the verification check to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid; using the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; and limiting the download of the instructions to a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route (e.g. col 4 ln 1-30).

17. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Dian and Kara in order to obtain greater security in the processing of mail.

18. Regarding claim 27 –

Dian discloses a method of operating a data center for processing mail piece data associated with a mail piece, the method comprising the steps of receiving the mail piece data from a remotely located incoming mail processing center the mail piece data being obtained by at least one of a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces located at the incoming mail processing center; an incoming mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces; said downloading instructions for processing the mail piece, the instructions being based upon the verification check, to an outgoing mail processing center located downstream in a path of travel from the incoming mail processing center, the outgoing mail processing center including a plurality of mail processing machines that perform automated processing of mail pieces; and using the instructions to control operation of at least one of the plurality of mail processing machines located at the outgoing mail processing center to process the mail piece (e.g. col 2 ln 21 – col 3 ln 35).

19. Dian does not disclose, but Kara does, performing a verification check on the mail piece data (e.g. col 2 ln30 – col 3 ln40).

20. Regarding claims 28-29 –

Kara discloses a method comprising the steps of using cryptographic calculations during the verification check to determine whether or not the mail piece data is valid; using the mail piece data to determine a delivery route for the mail piece; and limiting the download of the instructions to a particular one of a plurality of outgoing mail processing centers that corresponds to the delivery route (e.g. col 3 ln 50-65).

21. Regarding claims 30-31 –

Kara discloses a method comprising the steps of using the mail piece data to determine a service class for the mail piece; and using the service class to establish a priority for the download of instructions from the data center to the outgoing mail processing center; further comprising the steps) of: associating the instructions with a global identification number, and downloading the instructions with the global identification number; and wherein the mail piece is of a physical type; and the mail piece data includes a postal indicium (e.g. col 4 ln 1-30).

22. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Dian and Kara in order to obtain greater security in the processing of mail.

23. Examiner's note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may be applied as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant, in preparing the responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part

of the claimed invention as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

***Conclusion***

24. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cristina Owen Sherr whose telephone number is 571-272-6711. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:00 Monday through Friday.

25. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on 571-272-6712. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

26. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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